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NORTH KOREAN INDUSTRIES RECOVERING RAPIDLY

[Comment: The following report gives information on the 1954 economic rehabilitation plan of North Korea and the extent of its industrial recovery since the Korean war. The information is based on East Berlin, Hague, and Peiping papers covering the period 17 January through 31 March 1954.]

TO INCREASE INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION BY 60.8 PERCENT OVER 1953 -- Berlin, Neues Deutschland, 23 Mar 54

The cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea recently approved the 1954 plan for the reconstruction and development of the republic's economy. The plan calls for an increase in industrial production by 60.8 percent over 1953. All fields of the economy are to reach their prewar [Korean] level within 3 years.

Machine manufacturing, chemical production, construction-material production, agricultural implement manufacturing, and lumber production started in early 1954. In P'yongyang the construction of a textile mill is almost completed and a new paper mill is expected to be ready for operation by the end of 1954.

Also by the end of 1954 the restoration work on the Yangdok-Ch'onsong electric railroad line is to be completed, and regular express-train traffic is to be resumed on the major lines throughout North Korea.

During 1954, 1,855 new stores of all kinds are to be opened in cities and 559 are to be opened in villages.

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TO EXPAND LIGHT INDUSTRIES -- The Hague, Economische Voorlichting, 19 Mar 54

It is reported from North Korea that the P'yongyang Textile Mill is to be expanded to 60,000 spindles; the [annual] cotton cloth production is to rise to 50-60 million meters; a dyeing and bleaching plant is to be built with Soviet assistance; and shoe factories with a total production capacity of 20 to 25 million pairs of rubber shoes per year will be built with machinery supplied by the People's Republic of China. The capacity of the meat- and fish-packing industry is also to be expanded.

METALLURGICAL INDUSTRY SURPASSES JANUARY-FEBRUARY PRODUCTION QUOTA -- Feiping, Kung-jen Jih-pao, 31 Mar 54

P'yongyang, 30 March (Hsin-hua) -- Many North Korean metallurgical plants which have partly recovered from the war have surpassed their January-February production quotas for 1954. The average output was 106.9 percent of the quota and, except for two ironworks, the plants exceeded their individual quotas by 1.1 to 20.7 percent. The costs were lowered by an average of 2.4 to 3.8 percent.

The Songjin Steelworks is already producing many types of steel products representing 20 percent of the entire industry output.

Ever since the Korean truce the North Korean government has laid great stress on restoring the metallurgical industry. Only 55 days after the truce the electric furnace No 2 of the Kangson Steelworks resumed steel production. The Songjin Steelworks also resumed operation of its four electric furnaces, two rolling machines, tempering and heating equipment, and other equipment.

The Hwanghae Ironworks, the Kimch'ak Ironworks, the Mump'yongni Leadworks, the Ch'ongjin Steelworks, the Namp'o Steel Refinery, the Puryong Metalworks, and others also have practically recovered. Recently, two smelters have been repaired at the Mump'yongni Leadworks, and two smelters were put into working condition at the Namp'o Steel Refinery. The Mump'yongni and Namp'o plants will be producing lead and steel, respectively, by the next quarter.

In the ferrous metals field, a workman at the steel-tempering shop of the Songjin Steelworks led other workers to study and adopt advanced Soviet steel-tempering techniques, and raised efficiency 1.5 times.

In the nonferrous field, the workers of the Mump'yongni Leadworks rebuilt two smelters and increased their capacity to twice the prewar level. When these two smelters begin operation on 1 April 1954, the annual production of crude lead should reach 226 percent and that of electrolytic lead 81 percent of the prewar level.

The rehabilitation of the North Korean metallurgical industry has been hastened greatly by help from friendly countries. The People's Republic of China sent a large amount of cement, coke, fire brick, and construction equipment.

The North Koreans wish to restore metallurgical production to at least 35 percent of the prewar level by the end of 1954.

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IRONWORKS AND CEMENT FACTORY RESUME OPERATIONS -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao,
17 Jan 54

Reconstruction of three kilns was started on 28 August 1953 at the Hwanghae Ironworks. By 30 September 1953, one of the kilns was repaired and put into operation. At present this kiln is producing fine quality firebricks.

The oxygen shop at the Hwanghae Ironworks increased its operating efficiency after the installation of a new machine shipped from the USSR. The rolling mills are already in operation at this ironworks, and some workers have surpassed their individual production quotas by as much as 40 percent. The casting department is also in operation and is producing pots, gridirons, and plows.

The Sunghori Cement Factory has been in operation since 9 August 1953 and is now producing from 130 to 140 tons of cement daily. The cement produced here is used for reconstruction work in P'yongyang and at the Hwanghae Ironworks.

CHINESE ARMY ENGINEERS HELP REPAIR BRIDGES -- Peiping, Kung-jen Jih-pao,
17 Mar 54

P'yongyang, 16 March (Hsin-hua) -- Korean soldiers and troops of the Chinese Volunteer Army have been working together to repair the seventh bridge over the Puk-taedong-gang. A considerable amount of equipment and materials had to be brought to the site by rail. Since there was no siding near the bridge, the work trains had to use the main track to unload, thereby delaying the movement of regular trains. To solve this problem the Chinese Army Engineer Corps installed a switch and laid a spur track close to the bridge, thereby avoiding interference with the main traffic.

TOKCH'ON RAILROAD TRANSPORTS COAL 24 HOURS DAILY -- Peiping, Kung-jen Jih-pao,
31 Mar 54

Traffic was resumed recently on the Tokch'on coal-mine railroad in P'yongan-namdo. The trains transport high-quality anthracite coal 24 hours a day from Changsan-ni in Tokch'on-gun to factories and inhabitants in P'yongyang and other industrial centers. On the return trip, these trains bring from the cities the materials used for restoring the mines and the goods needed by the workers. Before the [Korean] war the Changsan-ni coal mine produced 250,000 tons of anthracite coal annually.

During the war, this railroad was badly damaged by the US and Rhee armies. In September 1953, a detachment of railroad troops of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army started rehabilitation work on this line.

The rehabilitation work was difficult and included the repair of 19 bridges crossing the Puk-taedong-gang, of which 15 were demolished by US bombs. The restoring of the roadbed and ballast alone required moving some 49,000 fang [one fang equals about 100 cubic feet] of earth and stones.

Since the materials for repairing the steel girders were lacking, troops of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army had to salvage from the river the materials which had been bombed and had sunk. They also had to gather old materials from a distance as far as 10 miles or more. Five companies of soldiers worked day and night to salvage parts -- 50 types and 3,100 items in all. They salvaged materials worth 2 billion yuan.

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The laying of girders started on 30 November 1953. During construction, the work was speeded up from 3 hours and 25 minutes required for each span to one hour and 56 minutes per span. The whole project was finished on 9 December with the completion of a 397.76-meter steel bridge.

Among the Chinese troops who laid the rails was the Chang Ts'ai-hua team which made a record on the Ch'eng-tu--Chungking Railway by laying 5.7 kilometers in one day.

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